# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:29
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2007
DATA ON MALNUTRITION
Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai;Singh Shri Sugrib

**Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Plan panel has raised doubts about the data on malnutrition in the country as reported in the Hindustan Times dated August 9, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Anganwadi Centres are not maintaining malnutrition data properly in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith guidelines of the Union Government in this regard; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this direction?

## Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a),(b),(c),(d)&(e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a),(b), (c), (d) & (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 29 FOR 16.11.2007 BY SHRI SUGRIB SINGH AND SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL REGARDING 'DATA ON MALNUTRITION'

(a)&(b) The Planning Commission in the news Report of the National Daily 'Hindustan Times' of 9th August, 2007, while drawing attention to the percentage of malnourished children reported by National Family Health Survey (NFHS) −III as 46% and for the United Nation Agencies as 55%, doubts the data on malnourished children generated under ICDS Scheme, being implemented by the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

Variations are inevitable and therefore not comparable, as the methodology adopted for ascertaining levels of malnutrition by the Agencies, are different. Nutritional status of children below 6 years is measured in ICDS Programme by weight-for-age of the children using IAP(Indian Acedemy of Paediatrics) growth standard, while the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-III/ UN Agencies use weight-for-age Standard Deviation Classification (NCHS Growth Standard). These two different standards are not comparable directly.

As per the reports received from the States, the percentage of malnourished children in India varies from 33.95% to 0.57%, in varying grades of malnutrition, as on 30 June, 2007.

(c ),(d)&(e) At the grass-roots level, Anganwadi Centre (AWC) is the focal point for delivery of services under ICDS Scheme. Anganwadi Centres are maintaining malnutrition data and various registers have been prescribed for the purpose. In the existing guidelines, Growth Charts have been prescribed at the AWCs to record the Weight For Age data on malnutrition of children (0-6 years), ever since the inception of the scheme, based on Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP)' Classifications. Anganwadi Centres are provided with weighing scales to weigh the children below six year of age. Anganwadi Workers have also been trained to record and read the data from the Growth Charts. States/Union Territories are addressed, from time to time, to ensure that proper records including growth chart/health cards are maintained properly and updated regularly at the AWCs, to monitor malnourished children.

Recently, this Ministry has also taken a decision to adopt the new World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards in ICDS Scheme which are scientific and gender specific.